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# SIR EDWARD'S EVIDENCE



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**BY**

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**CAMBRIDGE, MASS.**



**AN ADDRESS**

**Delivered before the German University League  
New York, N.Y., April 24, 1915.**

Since the following address was delivered, Dr. Conybear has, under date of June 30, 1915, in a short note published at his request in the London "Times", recanted his views on Sir E. Grey, quoted by Dr. Von Mach. However, the note did not add anything to Dr. Conybear's exhaustive analysis of the "evidence" contained in his earlier letter, published in the "Vital Issue" of April 17, 1915.

GERMAN UNIVERSITY LEAGUE.

# SIR EDWARD'S EVIDENCE<sup>1</sup>

## PART I

### Sir Edward's Speech in Parliament

Dr. F. Cornwallis Conybeare, of Oxford University, wrote in his famous letter<sup>2</sup> these significant words:

In August and September and October I felt so sure that England had all the right on her side and Germany all the wrong that I hardly troubled to read the diplomatic documents.

Then a certain event made him hesitate and ask whether it was possible that England, or at least her leading man, Sir Edward Grey, might be in error. He studied the evidence, and as the result of his studies reached the conclusion that before long England would find Sir Edward Grey guilty of treason and send him to the gallows, for it was Grey's treasonable lies, he thought, that had rushed England into the war.

How the English will choose to deal with Sir Edward Grey is their own affair, but it is the affair of the whole world to enquire whether Dr. Conybeare's conclusions concerning Sir Edward's reliability are correct.

There can be no doubt that in America Sir Edward's evidence has been generally credited as true. Professor Samuel Harden Church, President of the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, and author of *The Life of Cromwell*, may be cited as a typical American, unwilling to form a rash judgment, and, therefore, eager to study the evidence. He has published his conclusions in a pamphlet called *Reply to the German Professors*, and says:

We are all going deeper than the surface in our search for the truth. \* \* \* In the English *White Paper* we have all the telegrams which were exchanged between the English Foreign Office over the signature of Sir Edward Grey and the diplomatic officials of the other powers, including the Imperial Chancellor of Germany.\*

And speaking of the American judgment, Professor Church says:

That judgment is not based upon the lies and calumnies of the enemies of Germany, nor upon the careless publication contained in newspapers, but upon a profound study of the official correspondence in the case, \* \* \* and the public demand for this indisputable evidence has not yet been satisfied.\*

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<sup>1</sup>An address delivered before the German University League, New York, on April 24, 1915. This address was printed as Chapters XXXI and XXXII of the author's "Germany's Point of View," McClurg & Co., Chicago, 1915, and is here reprinted with the permission of the publishers.

<sup>2</sup>First published in the *Vital Issue* of April 17, 1915, and reprinted as Booklet No. 3, of the Vital Issue Booklets. The Vital Issue Co., Park Row Building, New York.

\**Ibid*, p. 6.

Professor Church, therefore, it will be seen, has placed implicit confidence in the completeness and honesty of Sir Edward's evidence. Nor is he alone in his belief. So keen an observer of America as Viscount Bryce was quoted in the Boston *Herald* of March 22, 1915, as follows:

As to the general feeling in the United States, my correspondents entirely agree with what may be gathered from the leading American journals. The vast majority of the people condemn the German Government, laying the blame for the outbreak of the strife upon it and Austria. This they do not from racial sympathy with England nor from their traditional friendliness to France, but because *their reading of the diplomatic correspondence in the first half of August convinced them that Germany was the aggressor and put herself utterly in the wrong.*

Both Viscount Bryce and Professor Church are right in explaining the pro-British attitude of many Americans by their study of the official documents. The British *Blue Book*, first published as a *White Paper*, reads well. It did, therefore, not occur to the people that its trustworthiness was doubtful. For these reasons a somewhat detailed investigation of Sir Edward's evidence is in place even at this late hour.

Sir Edward delivered his great speech in Parliament on the evening of August 3, 1914. The speech, which was unsupported by documentary evidence—for the *Blue Book* was not issued until August 6—was at once cabled to America. It should have, and was believed to have, contained the salient points and facts, for England went to war on the information given by Sir Edward Grey on August 3, and was at war with Germany before the telegrams were published.

Nobody can, of course, expect a minister to include every despatch in a speech. But he has the right to assume that the minister has not suppressed such information as would have made his country keep the peace. Dr. Conybeare and many Englishmen believe that Sir Edward suppressed such information, and that if he had divulged it peace would have been preserved. Whatever view one wishes to take of this subject, the fact is established that Sir Edward's speech was accepted by many Americans and by most Englishmen as a fair and honorable statement of the facts. For this reason Dr. Conybeare's letter is of great importance.

But it is possible to go even farther than the Oxford scholar and charge Sir Edward not only with unfortunate omissions, but also with positive falsehood. He said in his speech (*Blue Book*, p. 134),

We have disclosed the issue, the information which we have.

When he said this he had not disclosed the information he had on the following important points:

(1) The telegrams exchanged between the royal houses of London, Berlin and Petrograd, in which many people see the sincere efforts of the German Emperor to preserve peace; (2) the final offer of Germany made by the German Ambassador, and published later as No. 123 of the *Blue Book*; (3) the full promise made to France, which has never been published by England, and seems to have been unknown even to Dr. Conybeare; (4) the British-Russian naval agreement, without which Russia would never have dared to

risk a war; (5) the "conversations" between the British and Belgian general staffs, which had given to England all the military secrets of Belgium, and in a war between Germany and England made it practically impossible for Belgium to remain a neutral outsider.

The first of these omissions is sufficiently discussed by Dr. Conybeare. The second, however, grows more formidable when one compares Sir Edward's excuse why he did not mention the final liberal offer of Germany with a message he sent to France. It will be remembered from Dr. Conybeare's letter that Sir Edward explained, when he was challenged in Parliament late in August, that he had thought the offer had been made unofficially by the German Ambassador, and not by Germany. Dr. Conybeare tried to prove the falsity of this excuse by innuendo, and has made a strong case. The whole matter, however, is clinched by Number 126 of the French *Yellow Book*,\* where the French Ambassador reports home his conversation with Sir Edward Grey concerning Germany's offer. He writes under date of August 1 1914:

Sir Edward Grey has told me that in the council this morning the Cabinet considered afresh the situation. *Germany having demanded* from England a declaration of neutrality, and not having obtained it, the British Government remained master of its actions.

There is not one word here of an "unofficial" offer. On the contrary, the friendly proposals are presented to France as a *demand* made by Germany.

When Sir Edward, therefore, told Parliament that he had disclosed his information, although he had not mentioned this offer, he did not speak the truth. And when he later told Parliament that he had believed the offer to have been unofficial, he either told a falsehood to Parliament or he had told one to Paul Cambon on August 1, 1914.

And even this is not all, for Sir Edward actually spoke as follows on August 3 (*Blue Book*, pp. 128, 129):

But I understand that the German Government would be prepared, if we would pledge ourselves to neutrality, to agree that its fleet would not attack the northern coast of France. I have only heard that shortly before I came to the House, but it is far too narrow an engagement for us.

He had heard it on August 1, and had heard much more, too, so that the last sentence is a deliberate falsehood. The German offer of August 1 reads (*Blue Book*, No. 123):

He [the German Ambassador] asked me whether if Germany gave a promise not to violate Belgium neutrality we would engage to remain neutral. \* \* \* The Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could not formulate conditions on which we would remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her colonies might be guaranteed.

Under this liberal offer Sir Edward might have secured the neutrality of Belgium, the integrity of France and her colonies, and the German agreement not to attack the northern coast of France with her fleet, exactly as Germany had refrained from doing in 1870. In fact, he might have avoided the war. For France would have refused to support Russia, unless she had been sure of the support of England, and alone Russia would not have risked a war.

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\*It is a strange fact that Dr. Conybeare has nowhere made use of the French *Yellow Book*.



One also should remember that Sir Edward declined this German offer with the words, "I could only say that we must keep our hands free," and that when he said this he had twice before, on the preceding day and on this very day, pledged himself personally to the French Ambassador and promised to secure the support of the Cabinet for France. The dealings of Sir Edward Grey in this entire matter have been fully exposed in the discussion of the French *Yellow Book*.\*

The third point mentioned above as falsely stated in Sir Edward's speech of August 3 was the assurance which he said he had given to France. There is a discrepancy between the message he actually sent to France and the message he told Parliament the Cabinet had authorized him to send. The passage from the speech (*Blue Book*, p. 128) reads as follows:

Yesterday afternoon I gave to the French Ambassador the following statement:

I am authorized to give an assurance that if the German fleet comes into the channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against the French coasts or shipping, the British fleet will give all the protection in its power. This assurance is, of course, subject to the policy of His Majesty's Government receiving the support of Parliament, and *must not be taken as binding* His Majesty's Government to take any action until the above contingency of action by the German fleet takes place.

The message which the French Ambassador sent home on August 3 (*Yellow Book*, No. 143) reads as follows:

Sir Edward Grey has authorized me to tell you that you may inform Parliament that to-day he made declarations in the Commons as to the present attitude of the British Government, and that the chief of these declarations was as follows:

If the German fleet cross the Straits or go north in the North Sea in order to double the British Isles with a view to attacking the French coasts or the French navy, or to disturbing the French mercantile marine, the British fleet will intervene in order to give the French marine entire protection, so that *from that moment on England and Germany would be in a state of war*.

Sir Edward Grey pointed out that the mention of operations through the North Sea implied protection against a demonstration in the Atlantic Ocean.

The declaration with regard to the intervention of the British fleet, of which I gave you the text in my telegram of August 2,\* is to be regarded as *binding* the British Government. Sir Edward Grey assured me of this, and added that the French Government was therefore in a position to bring it to the knowledge of the Chambers.

Who was in error? Did Sir Edward Grey give the above quoted message to the French Ambassador, or did he not? The French Prime Minister, M. Viviani, addressed the French Chambers on August 4 (*Yellow Book*, No. 159), and there repeated Sir Edward Grey's declaration ending with the words, "so that from that moment on England and Germany will be in a state of war!" and continued, "From now on, therefore, the British fleet covers our northern and western coasts."

Such a public announcement, it would seem, could not have been made without contradiction by Sir Edward Grey if it had not been true. But if it was true, Sir Edward either did not tell Parliament the truth on August 3, or if he did, he had his speech revised for publication. In either case the American reader who has based his opinion at least in part on this speech must realize that he has builded on sand.

\*"Germany's Point of View," Chapters XVII, XVIII and XIX.

\*This declaration is substantially the same as that given by Sir Edward Grey as the only one he sent to France.



He also should realize that Sir Edward uttered this threat of war before a single German soldier had entered Belgium. Germany has always claimed that the certainty of England's entrance into the war, and the knowledge of secret understandings between England, France and Belgium, forced her to anticipate her opponents or commit hari-kari. In Sir Edward's own publications none of the documents which prove his firm determination to join France against Germany, whether Belgium was invaded or not, is printed. This explains the discrepancy between his published version and Viviani's public statement of the British message to France.

The same reason induced Sir Edward Grey to keep from Parliament the naval agreement he had permitted to be made with Russia. There can no longer be any doubt that such an agreement exists. In the French *Yellow Book* this Russian naval agreement is spoken of as a fact, with the further comment that its existence had made the German Ambassador pessimistic concerning the future of his country. And in Russia the general text of the agreement had actually been published!\* It had given Russia the conviction that in case of a conflict England would take her part and fight by her side.

And even in America the conclusion of this British-Russian agreement had remained no secret. It was mentioned in the daily press, and Albert Shaw, editor of the *American Review of Reviews*, wrote in June for publication in the July number of his magazine:

The bitter feeling between Russia and Austria continues, if we may believe the tone of the press in these two countries, and the guarded though unmistakable utterances of Russian and Austrian public men. It is believed that *Russia is intending to provoke a near eastern crisis*. Reports are also rife that a secret naval convention has been concluded between England and Russia, with the object of *enforcing the demands of the Triple Entente against Germany*.

Here not only mention is made of the Russo-English naval agreement, but a definite hint of the aggressive attitude of the Triple Entente is given. Sir Edward's evidence, however, is so arranged that the reader receives the impression that nothing had been further from the mind of England, Russia and France than aggressive ideas. What these ideas were, so far as Russia is concerned, is explained in the same number of the *American Review of Reviews*, which quotes the eminent Russian statesman, Professor Mitronov, of Moscow, as saying:

Germany has pushed Russia out of the Balkans and put Austria across her path. For Russia, however, extension into the Balkans is a "political necessity," and nothing short of the possession of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles will end the intolerable situation.

Knowing these wishes of Russia, Sir Edward Grey entered into a secret naval agreement with her, stiffened her backbone, and placidly saw her make her preparations for the war. The same number of the *American Review of Reviews* contains also this item:

An evidence that Russia is preparing for some warlike movement on a large scale is furnished by a letter of a Tiflis correspondent appearing in a French newspaper. That part of the Russian Trans-Caucasus territory known as Georgia was the center of the revolutionary whirlwind of 1905-1906, toward the close of the Russo-Japanese war. It seems that the terrible repressive measures which were then taken to punish these

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\*For the translation see "Germany's Point of View," p. 44.

revolutionary sentiments are now to be repeated with even greater vigor in the same regions. It is a striking illustration of the ruthless methods of Russian militarism.

If such and similar Russian measures, notably the Russian mobilization, were known to the Paris press, they were known also to Sir Edward Grey. There is, however, in all his documents not one despatch that gives the least hint that he tried to moderate the Russian aggressive spirit. On the contrary, he encouraged it, for nothing was so well calculated to stiffen the Russian military party than the knowledge of the people that England had at last been prevailed upon to commit herself, and had made a secret naval agreement with Russia.

It is not claimed that this agreement was a formal treaty. It was a "gentlemen's agreement," just as the understanding with France had been based on nothing more than two letters exchanged between Sir Edward Grey and Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador. These Sir Edward was obliged to lay before Parliament on August 3, after he had repeatedly denied in the House of Commons that any understanding with France existed. This whole question of Sir Edward's quibbling with words and misinforming Parliament is fully treated by C. H. Norman in a pamphlet, *Britain and the War: A Study in Diplomacy*, London and Manchester, 1914.

The French letters had been preceded and followed by exhaustive discussions between the French and British military authorities. The same has been true of the Russo-English relations as appears from the Russian version of the naval agreement. If Sir Edward, therefore, said to Parliament, "We have disclosed the information which we have," without giving his understanding with Russia, he conveyed to his hearers an impression which does not square with the facts.

And what can finally be said of Sir Edward's lengthy discussion of the Belgian question in his speech of August 3, without informing Parliament of the fact that negotiations between the British and Belgian military authorities had been in progress for years, and that on the strength of such "conversations" England found herself in complete possession of the military secrets of Belgium, and had herself worked out a definite plan of throwing troops into Belgium? Some of the documents which prove the close relations that have existed for years between England and Belgium were discovered by the German Government in Brussels, and published in the *North German Gazette*, the German official paper, on October 12. Facsimile reproductions of two of these documents appeared in the same paper on November 25, 1914. At first the pro-Allies press was tempted to doubt the genuineness of these documents, but on January 27, 1915, Sir Edward Grey inadvertently acknowledged their genuineness in trying to refute some of the charges against him that had been based on them.

The question as to what extent these Anglo-Belgian conversations had impaired the standing of Belgium as a neutral country does not belong here.<sup>1</sup> The important point in the appreciation of Sir Edward's trustworthiness is

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<sup>1</sup>For a full discussion see "Germany's Point of View."

that he discussed the Belgian question at length without referring to the Anglo-Belgian understanding, and yet had the courage to utter these words: "We have disclosed the issue, the information which we have."

Quite recently and after waiting almost six months the Belgian Government has made a tardy defense against the charge that by entering into an Anglo-Belgian military understanding it had betrayed the Belgian people. The censorship is severe, but enough news has leaked through to make it probable that King Albert and his government will find it exceedingly difficult to convince the Belgians that they were not responsible for their sufferings, if the German publications are proved to be true. This explains King Albert's tardy defence which was issued on March 17. Cabled extracts appeared in the American press of the following day, while the full document was printed here on March 31, 1915.

The Belgian defense is threefold: (1) The German allegations are a "tissue of lies" and their "facsimile" publications falsified; (2) the measures discussed in the documents were forced upon Belgium by the German danger; (3) the Belgian Government is entirely innocent of the charge of having taken the measures rendered necessary by the German danger and discussed in the documents.

Let the reader in passing pay tribute to the magnificent logic of this defense, and then proceed to the investigation of the specific charge of dishonesty made by the Belgian Government against Germany. It is thus stated:

To produce an impression on those ignorant of the facts, "German honesty" suppressed, when the *précis* of the above-named conversation was published, the clause in which it was set forth that the exchange of opinion therein recorded had reference only to the situation that would be created if Belgian neutrality had already been violated.

The Belgian Government gives to the allegations of the German Chancery the only answer that they deserve—they are a tissue of lies, all the more shameless because they are set forth by persons who claim to have studied the original documents. But what are the documents which Germany produces in order to prove Belgium guilty? They are two in number: (1), The narrative of certain interviews which took place between Lieutenant General Ducarne and Colonel Bernardston in 1906. In the course of these interviews the British officer set forth his views as to the way in which England could help Belgium in case the latter were attacked by Germany. One phrase in the document clearly proves that Colonel Bernardston is dealing with a hypothetical case, viz., "the entry of English troops into Belgium would only take place after a violation of Belgium neutrality by Germany." The translation in the *Norddeutsche Zeitung* [the official Gazette] of November 25 omits this clause.

When the Belgian Government made this charge they apparently believed that the *German Official Gazette* would not be available in the neutral countries, where it was hoped the charge would fall on fertile ground. The facts are as follows: The sentence appears (1) in the facsimile published by the *Gazette* (page 1). It is a marginal note and appears in exactly the same position in which it was written in the original; (2) in the discussion of the text (page 2, column 4, lines 34 to 37), the following is written:

In the document there is the following marginal note: *L'entrée des Anglais en Belgique ne se ferait qu'après la violation de notre neutralité par l'Allemagne.*

When Dr. Bernhard Dernburg issued his publication of these documents he inserted the marginal note in the running text (page 4, column 1, paragraph 5, lines 4 to 6). It may, however, well be asked whether the official *Gazette*

did not give greater prominence to this important sentence by devoting a paragraph to it at the end of the translation of the running text, than Dr. Dernburg did by inserting it in the text.

The charge of dishonesty, therefore, made by the Belgian Government falls to the ground. And the same is true of the second charge which, in the Belgian defense, reads as follows:

Moreover, the photograph of General Ducarne's report contains the words: "The officer with whom I spoke insists that our conversation has been absolutely confidential." For the word conversation the *Norddeutsche Zeitung* substitutes the word "convention." Colonel Bernardston is made to say that "our convention" has been absolutely confidential!

Such proceedings need no commentary.

The facts from the official *Gazette* are these: The facsimile reproduction of the letter (page 2, last word of line 1) is "conversation," and not "convention," as the Belgian charge would make one believe. In the translation (page 2, column 1, line 34) this is translated with *Abkommen*, which is perhaps most accurately rendered in English by "understanding." The translation into English is easy because both languages possess the word "conversation," and in both the meaning of the word may range from "desultory talk" to "understanding." In German the case is different, for while a translator who is not afraid of using a foreign word might have said "Konversation," nine people out of ten would probably have rendered "conversation" here by *Abkommen*, for the text implies that the two military representatives of Great Britain and Belgium had come to an understanding.

The Belgian defense continues:

The British Government has always held, as did the Belgian Government, that the consent of the latter was a necessary preliminary [to the entry of British troops into Belgium].

This assertion is flatly contradicted by the documents themselves, the second of which contains these words:

Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges told the [Belgian] General that \* \* \* at the time of the recent events the British Government would have immediately effected a disembarkment in Belgium even if we had not asked for assistance. The General objected that for that our consent was necessary.

The military attaché [Lt.-Col. Bridges] answered that he knew this, but that—since we were not able to prevent the Germans from passing through our country, England would have landed her troops in Belgium anyhow [*en tout état de cause*].

Very interesting also are the remarks which Lord Roberts made in the *British Review*, of August, 1913, and which are here quoted from the *Fatherland*, of March 17, 1915:

I do not think the nation yet realizes how near it was to war as lately as August, 1911. For many autumn nights our home fleet lay in Cromarty Firth with torpedo nettings down, with the gun crews sleeping on deck, with a live projectile ready in each gun, and with the war heads fitted to each and every torpedo. Our Expeditionary Force was held in equal readiness instantly to embark for Flanders to do its share in maintaining the balance of power in Europe.

There is not a word here of asking the consent of Belgium. And whatever the American press may say, no English officer can be found who can deny on his honor that it had not been known for years in British military circles that England would send her troops to Belgium in case of war, whether



Belgium wished this or no. After Belgium had given her military secrets to England, who knew the exact size of each garrison, the number of guns, how far they could shoot, where each place was vulnerable, how many troops could be fed in each village or town, where the Belgian troops would gather, how they planned to provision themselves, and so on, Belgium was no longer free to act as she chose. When she first discussed her military affairs with England, she may have done so absolutely honestly and in fear of an invasion by Germany. When her Government permitted these "conversations" to go as far as they were carried under Sir Edward Grey's instructions this Government suddenly found itself entirely at the mercy of its new allies.

The fiction has been kept up in the American press that Belgium is not one of the Allies, but a neutral for whose restoration the Allies are fighting. But even Mr. Bryan knows better, and in the famous interview he granted the Rev. D. MacFayden for the *Westminster Gazette* of December 23, 1914, he refers to Belgium as the ally\* of England.

And such Belgium undoubtedly is, and was even before the war began, for that intimate relations had been established between Sir Edward Grey and the Belgian Government is proved by the Brussels documents.

Like the ambassadorial agreement with France, and the naval agreement with Russia, the Belgian understanding had remained secret. Parliament and the English people had no idea how far Sir Edward had committed them. One of these agreements—that with France—he was forced to disclose on August 3, and in choosing the French letters he gauged wisely the temper of his countrymen. He was equally wise in refraining from disclosing the other two, for an irate Parliament and surely an irate electorate would have swept him from the stage of politics.

Wise reticence is an admirable quality, but to keep silent on several of the most important bits of information, and yet to say with the air of an honest man: "We have disclosed the issue, the information which we have"—this is not admirable.

## PART II

### Sir Edward's Published Documents

So many people have read the British *Blue Book* and German *White Paper* and other official documents, who never before had even seen such publications, let alone looked into them, that the ethical principles according to which state papers are edited were unknown to them. The pro-English press, moreover, and such writers as James M. Beck, have led them to believe that

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\*The tone of this interview was so strongly anti-German and the reference to Belgium as the "ally" of England so important, if true, that the author wrote to Mr. Bryan asking him to confirm or deny the accuracy of the interview. The following courteous reply was received:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, Washington, D. C., December 29, 1914.

MY DEAR SIR:

For Mr. Bryan I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of December 25, in which you ask permission to quote the purported interview with Rev. Donald MacFayden on December 7, as authentic. In reply I am directed to say that Reverend MacFayden called at the State Department. He has reported the conversation from memory. The Secretary has no doubt that Doctor MacFayden tried to be accurate, but he would not want to have his words taken as an exact statement of his views. I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed) E. C. SWEET,  
Confidential Clerk.

Mr. Edmund von Mach,  
48 Shepard Street, Cambridge, Mass.

governments are accustomed to publish in their various white, blue, gray or orange papers the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. This, however, is nowhere done.

There are many bits of information which come to a government through its diplomatic connections which it would be indelicate, discourteous or unwise to give to the public. The official documents on American foreign relations and all white, gray or orange papers are "edited." They are understood to be so by Congress, Parliament, the Reichstag, the Duma, etc., and no charge of dishonesty can be maintained against the respective governments on that score.

This whole question has been so carefully treated in the *New York Times' Current History of the War* (Vol. I, No. 3, p. 438 ff) that it is not necessary to repeat here the arguments and proofs there given. They were compiled as a reply to ex-Assistant Attorney-General James M. Beck, whose article *In the Supreme Court of Civilization* has been reprinted in book form and won the approval of the Allies and pro-Allies press. Mr. Beck is a member of the law firm of Shearman & Sterling, and is upholding the pro-English traditions of this firm. During the Civil War, when the Union was suffering untold insults and damages at the hands of England, Shearman was the defender of his country's worst enemies, and the motto of the firm seems to have been ever since, "England, right or wrong. We are for England first, last and forever!"

Since the reply to Mr. Beck in the *New York Times* was written, the French *Yellow Book* has been published and other documents have come to light on the strength of which it is possible to prove the inaccuracy and incompleteness of Sir Edward's *Blue Book* in several particulars. A careful reading of the *Blue Book* itself, moreover, has revealed falsifications of such a serious character that they seem to be incompatible with the assumption of honesty on the part of its editor.

The most glaring of all the omissions is Sir Edward's suppression of the dossier by which Austria explained her *démarche against Serbia*. If these Austrian proofs had been in the hands of the members of Parliament when the *Blue Book* was distributed to them, and if they had been read by the American people, when they formed their impressions of the causes of the war by reading "the diplomatic correspondence in the first half of August," as Viscount Bryce says, an entirely different impression might have been created. But be this as it may, nobody can defend Sir Edward's suppression of this important document.

It was sent from Vienna on July 25, and presented both in Paris and in London on July 27. The French *Yellow Book* prints most\* of it as received on that day, and calls it a "positive act of accusation against Serbia." In it Austria sets forth her relations with Serbia, and by documentary evidence and reports from the Servian press, including the official Servian Government paper,

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\*For the full text of the dossier see the Austrian *Red Book*. The *Yellow Book* does not print the several Annexes. In the absence of further proof it is impossible to state whether the Annexes are later additions, or whether the French Government failed to print the document in full.



tries to prove the complicity of the Servian Government in the murder of Serajevo.

Sir Edward received the *dossier* on the same day, July 27, and in the first paragraph of No. 48 of his *Blue Book* gives a very insufficient summary of it, so worded that no reader would suspect that it was based on an exhaustive presentation of Austria's grievances against Serbia. Whatever force, moreover, remained in the emasculated summary is spoiled by Sir Edward's own commentary on it in the last paragraph. This is not a sportsmanlike procedure. Honesty demanded the publication of Austria's *dossier*, or if Sir Edward considered it too long, or an insufficient explanation of Austria's course, at least the mention that he had received what Austria believed to be a full proof of the justice of her contentions.

As the suppression of the *dossier* is the most glaring *omission* from the British *Blue Book*, so Number 105 contains the most glaring *falsification*. This is the famous despatch of Sir Edward Grey to his Ambassador in Paris, dated July 30, in which he enclosed as a proof of his assertion that Germany was assuming a threatening attitude toward France, a telegram from the French Minister of Foreign Affairs to Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador in London, dated July 31. The impossibility of enclosing a note of July 31, in one written on July 30, was so apparent that Sir Edward omitted the date, July 31, in the later issues of his documents.\* But even the omission of this date did not make the note square with the facts. July 30 was Thursday. The enclosed note read: "The German army had its advance posts on our frontiers yesterday (Friday)." It was, therefore, necessary in the later editions to omit "Friday." But even this change did not suffice, because later on in the note, as first printed, these words occur:

All my information goes to show that the German preparations began on Saturday, the very day on which the Austrian note was handed in.

This is another mistake, and to correct it Sir Edward Grey had recourse to a footnote in his later reprints. The footnote to "Saturday" reads:

Sic: in original. The actual date of the presentation of the Austrian ultimatum was, in fact, Thursday, July 23. The Servian reply was dated Saturday, July 25, and it is clearly to the latter document that reference is intended.

This sounds honest. "Sic: in original!" Unfortunately for Sir Edward Grey the original despatch has been printed in the French *Yellow Book*, Number 106, and a comparison of Sir Edward's version of the French despatch with the despatch itself reveals the remarkable fact that Sir Edward has rewritten the original, using the exact French words wherever possible, but interpolating new ones whenever his several alterations made this necessary. To make the despatch stronger, Sir Edward began it with a sentence of the last paragraph, which reads:

The German army's advance posts are at our frontier posts.

and to make it more definite he added a date. The original French despatch is dated July 30. Sir Edward had it rewritten for presentation to the Cabinet

\*For a full discussion of these dates, see the author's chapter in *Why Europe Is at War*. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1915. The New York Times reprint of the English documents gives the first version; the so-called *Blue Book*, issued in London Foreign Office, September 28, 1914, gives the latter version.

meeting on July 31, and possibly showed it to his colleagues as having just been received. On July 31 he may have felt at liberty to add to the French statement "yesterday," or since the Cabinet meeting was on Friday to keep the French sentence, which is written in the present tense, and to add Friday in parenthesis. Whatever explanation is given one thing is sure, Sir Edward's first publication of the French despatch is as impossible as the second. The French note contained neither "yesterday" nor "Friday," and was written in the present tense. The English "translation" interpolated a date and changed the present to the past tense "had."

And more! The French note actually contains two references to "Saturday," to which Sir Edward felt obliged to add his footnote. They read:

The preparation in the fortresses (the cutting of wood, mounting of guns, construction of batteries, strengthening of wire entanglements) had already started\* in Germany on Saturday, the 25th. \* \* \* The stations were occupied in Germany on Saturday, the 25th.

In both cases "the 25th" is added to Saturday, and as appears from the note, no measures of mobilization are spoken of, merely a rearrangement of the troops on regular peace footing, and those protective measures which any commandant of a frontier fortress might deem it necessary to take. Sir Edward took the first passage as serving his purposes best, altered the singular "preparation" to the plural, and by omitting the words which explain what preparations are meant, gave the impression that the note had reference to steps generally referred to as mobilization. He wished to convey the impression that Germany and Austria had used the Serajevo murder as a pretext for an aggressive war, and therefore substituted for "the 25th" the words "the very day on which the Austrian note was handed in." In this he made a mistake, and since this sentence had been printed in his first edition, had to have recourse to a footnote.

It is not necessary to discuss Sir Edward's falsification of this note further. Those who wish to ascertain the truth can compare the English version with the French original. They will then see for themselves which passages Sir Edward felt obliged to omit, and why, and what changes he made in the original sentences he used. One change is rather noteworthy. Sir Edward's version speaks of the "*pacific intentions*" of France, while the French original says that "France is *resolute*."

Those who read the whole French note and may gather from it the impression that France really believed Germany was taking aggressive military measures on July 30, and had done so for several days, are reminded that on the same day, July 30, Viviani, the French Premier, had telegraphed to his ambassador in Petrograd instructions to urge Sazonof to "take no immediate steps which might offer to Germany a pretext for the total or partial mobilization of her forces." (*Yellow Book*, Number 101.) Such a despatch would have been nonsense if Viviani had not known that Germany had not yet proceeded even to a partial mobilization of her forces. A copy of this despatch

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\*This is quoted from the New York Times translation. The French original is as accurately translated with "begun" as with "started."

was sent to Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador in London, and unless one wishes to assume that he wilfully kept this information from Sir Edward Grey—which, considering the close relations of these men is incredible—Sir Edward Grey knew that Germany had not even partially mobilized when he presented his falsified version of the French note to the Cabinet on Friday, July 31.

That Sir Edward is not above insinuating false impressions is proved also by the internal evidence of his own *Blue Book*. The carefully prepared edition of September 28, 1914, contains an "Introductory Narrative of Events." On page IX Sir Edward writes:

Sir Edward Grey telegraphed to Berlin once more. "Mediation," he said, "was ready to come into operation by any method that Germany thought possible, if only Germany would press the button in the interest of peace." The telegram was despatched at about 4 o'clock on the evening of the 29th.

This appeal was followed almost immediately by a strange response. About midnight a telegram arrived at the Foreign Office from His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin. The German Chancellor had sent for him late at night. He had asked if Great Britain would promise to remain neutral in a war, provided Germany did not touch Holland and took nothing from France but her colonies.

Turning to the despatches themselves, Sir Edward's offer of mediation is contained in Number 84, while the next number contains the enquiry from the German Chancellor. By an oversight, however, the last paragraph of this despatch has not been omitted, and proves that Number 85 is *not* a response to Number 84. The nearest approach to a reply to Number 84 contained in the *Blue Book* is Number 107, received in London on July 31. When Sir Edward, therefore, called Number 85 a response to Number 84, and printed the two despatches in juxtaposition to bear out his statement, he was guilty of one of those deceptions which honorable men despise.

On page VII of his "Introductory Narrative of Events," Sir Edward writes:

On the 23d July the Austrian Ambassador told Sir E. Grey that an ultimatum was being handed to Serbia. For the first time Sir E. Grey heard "that there would be something in the nature of a time limit."

This statement is not true, unless one wishes to assume that the British sources of information were less than those of the French, and that the French Government intentionally kept Sir Edward in the dark. The French Government was informed by its Ambassador in Vienna on July 20 (*Yellow Book*, Number 14) that,

The shifts by which Serbia will no doubt wish to delay a direct and clear reply have been taken into account, and that is why a brief delay will be fixed for her to notify her acceptance or her refusal.

This means that France knew on July 20 that the note to Serbia would contain a time limit. And yet Sir Edward writes that he first heard of it when the note was presented on July 23!

He also studiously refrains from stating in his *Blue Book* that the Servian Minister in Berlin had declared on July 20 (French *Yellow Book*, Number 15) that,

This Government was ready to listen to the request of Austria arising out of the Serajevo outrage, provided that she did not demand judiciary co-operation.

Austria apparently had intended to ask this, but on the request of Germany dropped it and asked only for participation in the investigation.

Nobody needs ask why Sir Edward suppressed this information. It was his intention to present Germany as bound to have war, and unwilling to exert any moderating influence on Austria. Sir Edward, therefore, suppressed all information tending to show that Germany had done everything possible from the very beginning to preserve the peace of Europe. The several efforts in this direction made by Germany appear from the study of the French *Yellow Book*. (See "Germany's Point of View," Chapters XVII, XVIII and XIX.)

Only one other despatch from the French *Yellow Book* should be mentioned because it is of incalculable importance for the understanding of the causes of the war, and because Sir Edward Grey, who must have known its bearing, has not referred to the information it contained, either in his "Introductory Narrative" or in any of his despatches. It is a note (*Yellow Book*, Number 27, July 24, 1914) from the French Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs to his plenipotentiaries in Stockholm, Belgrade, London, Petrograd, Berlin and Rome and contains the information sent him by the French Ambassador in Vienna. According to this the Servian Minister in Austria acknowledged the guilt of Servians in the murder of Serajevo, and the existence of an anti-Servian propaganda in Servia!

Whatever one may think of Sir Edward's honesty, his consistency is admirable, for with unerring precision he has omitted from his *Blue Book* every information which tended to show that Servia was guilty on the evidence of her own ministers (*Yellow Book*, Number 27) or of Austria's exhaustive *dossier* (*Yellow Book*, Number 75); that Servia was at first willing to accept Austria's modified ultimatum (*Yellow Book*, Number 15); that Germany exerted a moderating influence on Austria (see "Germany's Point of View," page 255); in short, every bit of information which did not fit into his nicely arranged case that Germany had planned the war and that an innocent Servia had to serve as a pretext.

Omission and falsification are written large over this chapter of Sir Edward's evidence; and when the passions have cooled and scholars study his documents, he will not escape the judgment which overtakes all who by false evidence try to prove a case.

Some despatches are included in the British *Blue Book* for which Sir Edward Grey may not have been personally responsible, but whose variance with the true facts detracts from the credibility of his evidence.

On July 30 Sir G. Buchanan, the British Ambassador at Petrograd, reported two interviews he had had, in company with the French Ambassador, with the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Sazonof (*British Blue Book*, Number 97). The French Ambassador sent reports to his home office of the same interviews. (*Yellow Book*, Numbers 102 and 103.) There is no reason whatsoever to believe that the French Ambassador or his home office altered what Sazonof had told them, for nobody will suspect the French



of falsifying despatches in the interest of Germany. The notes are too long to be reprinted in full, but a few passages deserve to be placed side by side:

BRITISH NO. 97

[Omitted]

M. Sazonof told us that absolute proof was in possession of Russian Government that Germany was making military and naval preparations against Russia.

It will be noticed that Sir G. Buchanan omits all reference to the suspension of the Russian mobilization, which was designed to prevent Germany from taking any military steps on her part. Such an admission would not have squared with Sir Edward's evidence, according to which Germany had begun her preparations days before.

In the second paragraph the Russian "alarming information" has been turned by Sir G. Buchanan into "absolute proof." It is well known that Germany did not order mobilization until August 1, as of August 2. While, therefore, some unreliable and alarming information might have come to Sazonof, he could not possibly have spoken of "absolute proof."

The discrepancies between the French and English accounts of the second interview are even more astonishing, and show Sir G. Buchanan's or Sir Edward's animus toward Germany. M. Sazonof had repeated to the two ambassadors his interview with the German Ambassador.

BRITISH NO. 97, SECOND PART

German ambassador had a second interview with Minister of Foreign Affairs at 2 a. m., when former completely broke down on seeing that war was inevitable.

[The reference to Russia's mobilization is omitted.]

He appealed to M. Sazonof to make some suggestion which he could telegraph to German Government as a last hope. M. Sazonof accordingly drew up and handed to German Ambassador a formula in French, of which following is translation:

"If Austria, recognizing that the conflict with Servia has assumed character of question of European interest, declares herself ready to eliminate from her ultimatum points which violate principle of sovereignty of Servia, Russia engages to stop all military preparations."

Preparations for general mobilization will be proceeded with if this proposal is rejected by Austria, and inevitable result will be a European war. Excitement here has reached such a pitch that if Austria refuses to make a concession, Russia cannot hold back, and now that

FRENCH NO. 102

M. Sazonof, whom I have informed of your desire to see avoided any military measure that might give Germany a pretext for general mobilization [Note: his instructions read "total or partial mobilization"], replied that in the course of last night the General Staff had suspended the execution of some precautionary military measures, so as to avoid any misunderstanding. \* \* \* On the other hand, the Russian General Staff and Admiralty have received alarming information as to the preparation of the German Army and Navy.

FRENCH NO. 103

The German ambassador called to-night upon M. Sazonof to urge again, but in less categorical terms, that Russia should cease her military preparations, affirming that Austria would do nothing against the territorial integrity of Servia.

[The same]

Count de Pourtales promised to urge this proposal on his Government. In M. Sazonof's opinion the acceptance of his proposal by Austria will have as a logical consequence the opening of a liberation of the powers in London.

she knows that Germany is arming [Note: this was written on the same day on which Viviani said that Germany had not even begun partial mobilization] she can hardly postpone for strategical reasons, converting partial into general mobilization.

According to the French version, Sazonof was counting with the possibility of a peaceful solution, while Buchanan quotes him as practically ready for war. Why this discrepancy? And why, it may be asked, did Austria not seize this opportunity and by accepting Sazonof's offer stop the Russian mobilization?

The answer adds another black mark to Sir Edward's diplomacy, for at the request of his Ambassador at Petrograd, Sazonof withdrew his offer, substituting for it one which was impossible of acceptance. This is perhaps the most serious charge that can be made against Sir Edward, but it is fully substantiated.

Sazonof had made his offer late on July 30, or more properly in the night of July 30-31, at the immediate request of the German Ambassador and without consultation with the British and French Ambassadors. On the next day, July 31, the French Ambassador reported to Paris (*Yellow Book*, Number 113):

M. Sazonof informs me that he has modified his formula, at the request of the British Ambassador, as follows:

Then he transmits Sazonof's new formula, which makes greater demands on Austria, the chief of which is that Austria "stay the advance of her troops on Servian territory," and instead of promising that Russia would "stop all military preparations," ends with the ambiguous phrase: "Russia undertakes to maintain her waiting attitude." Since Russia at that time had been vigorously mobilizing for some time, and at least since July 25, according to the Czar's own telegram, maintaining "her waiting attitude" cannot mean stopping "all military preparations."

Sir Edward cannot claim that his Ambassador had acted *de suo*, and contrary to Sir Edward's wishes, for on the same day, July 31, he himself writes to Buchanan (*British Blue Book*, Number 110\*):

The German Ambassador asked me to urge the Russian Government to show goodwill in the discussions and to suspend their military preparations. \* \* \* I informed the German Ambassador that, as regards military preparations, I did not see how Russia could be urged to suspend them, unless some limit were put by Austria to the advance of her troops in Servia.

Sir Edward's wishes, therefore, were carried out when Sazonof altered his formula at the request of Sir G. Buchanan. The impression is conveyed that Austria and Germany refused to consider Sazonof's offer, when, as a matter of fact, the British diplomats themselves requested and obtained its withdrawal.

Sir Edward Grey has not yet explained Buchanan's and his own actions in this matter, but until he explains them, the only possible inference is that Sir Edward Grey did not want Russia to make a proposal to Austria and Germany that they were likely to accept. In short Sir Edward wanted war!

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\*See also *Blue Book*, Number 103.



He wanted war, because he had prepared for it, and because he had begun his mobilization weeks before, certainly as early as the end of June. His *Blue Book* begins with July 20, but this is only a feint, as is proved by the following affidavit in the possession of the author:

In a speech before the Boston Press Club on Sunday, January 14, Forbes Sutherland made the following statements:

That for several years he had been a member of the British military intelligence department.

That he landed in New York toward the end of June and he there found a cablegram from the home office in London, already three days old, telling him to report immediately.

That he telephoned to his local chief in Montreal, Canada, to inquire what it was all about, and that he was told that it was for the European service.

That he had returned to London and that about one week before the first declaration of war he had gone to Antwerp with one of the heads of the intelligence department to concert measures with the head of the Belgium secret service.

That he was now in this country overseeing the shipment of horses for the British army.

This affidavit was published in the *Fatherland*, April 14, 1915, and since Mr. Sutherland was then employed by a prominent New England paper as military expert, the editor of this paper complained of the publication, but had to confess that the affidavit was correct when the author offered to publish a correction if it had been wrong.

Why did Sir Edward recall Mr. Sutherland in June and send him to Antwerp, on his arrival in London, "to concert measures with the head of the Belgium Secret Service?" How does this square with the studied impression conveyed by his *Blue Book* that he had no thought of war before July 20, and took no active steps until days later?

Another affidavit in the possession of the author reads as follows:

In Viersen, Germany, is a very large concern which has over 2,000 retail stores in Germany dealing in coffee. The name is *Kaiser's Kaffee Geschæft*. The main stockholder's name, who is also the president of the company, is Commerzienrat Joseph Kaiser. This company has coffee plantations in Brazil, and on July 22 the home office cabled a large amount of money to their Brazil office via London. England attached this amount and did not forward same to Brazil.

Again one wonders why England should have taken this action on July 22, a day before the Austrian note was presented to Servia, if Sir Edward had no intention of bringing about an European war. Similar instances have been collected in large numbers and will undoubtedly be edited soon and presented as a strong indictment of Sir Edward Grey. He will be forced to explain them—which he has refused to do as yet—or stand convicted either of having treacherously plotted the war, or having falsified his evidence. The present discussion is concerned with Sir Edward's published evidence and may, therefore, disregard the other information except in so far as it forms a background against which the published evidence may be surveyed.

The British *Blue Book* is remarkably silent on the subject of British mobilization. The first reference to the British fleet occurs in Number 48, July 27, where Sir Edward quotes his interview with the Austrian Ambassador as follows:

I pointed out that our fleet was to have dispersed to-day, but we had felt unable to let it disperse. We should not think of calling up reserves at this moment, and there was no menace in what we had done about our fleet.

This statement is a falsehood, for the fleet was to have dispersed three days earlier, but had been kept mobilized by Winston Churchill, First Lord of

the Admiralty, without the knowledge or consent of the Cabinet.\* This is to-day an acknowledged fact, and appears also from a despatch in the French *Yellow Book*, Number 66, which reads in part as follows:

The attitude of Great Britain is defined by the stoppage of the demobilization of her fleet. The first Lord of the Admiralty on Friday already [that is July 24] discreetly took this step on his own initiative. To-night Sir Edward Grey and his colleagues decided to publish this news. The result is due to the conciliatory attitude of Servia and Russia.

The effect of this announcement, as is generally known, was to stiffen the military party of Russia, who saw in it the proof of England's intention to live up to the demands of her recently concluded naval agreement with Russia. The trustworthiness of Sir Edward's evidence, however, can be gauged by the fact that he writes over his own name as having taken place on July 27 what actually took place three days earlier, on July 24.

The mobilization of the British fleet could not be kept a secret long, and even if there had been no ulterior motive in publishing it, it would have had to be announced soon after it had taken place. It was not so with the mobilization of the land forces, and readers of the *Blue Book* have received the impression that no steps had been taken in advance of the outbreak of hostilities. This is due to Sir Edward's studious omission of all references to this subject. The French *Yellow Book* is less reticent, and in Number 108, July 30, Paul Cambon reports what Sir Edward had told him of his interview with the German Ambassador:

But my German colleague questioned the Secretary of State for foreign affairs as to the military preparations of England. Sir Edward Grey replied that they had no offensive character, but that in the present state of affairs on the continent it was natural to take some precautions.

This interview has been suppressed in Sir Edward's evidence!

But it is needless to pursue the investigation further. Those who have followed it may or may not agree with Dr. Conybeare of Oxford that Sir Edward Grey is "a sinister liar who forever has peace on his lips and war in his heart," but they cannot deny that Sir Edward's evidence is tainted with falsifications and omissions.

It was, however, largely on Sir Edward's evidence that Germany was condemned in this and other neutral countries. From this very evidence it now appears, when it is corrected and supplemented, that Germany and Austria, far from plotting an European war, were slowly but surely pushed into it by Sir Edward Grey. He tried to cover up his tracks, and, barring a few slips in his *Blue Book*, might have succeeded if it had not been for the publication of the voluminous French *Yellow Book*. Taking these two publications together and reading them against the background of history, there is no doubt that the present war is the result of a gigantic conspiracy against Germany.

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\*See also letter by Admiral Lord Fisher to Sir Henry Lucy, published in New York *Evening Sun* and Milwaukee *Free Press*, April 19, 1915. "I am in close touch with Winston (Churchill). He has been splendid for three things. First, the appointment to the command of the fleet of Jellicoe. Second, mobilizing before war was declared. Third, buying (this is euphemistic for seizing, E. v. M.) the two Turkish dreadnoughts. \* \* \* Mobilization of the fleet before the war upon the innocent pretext of an expected visit from the king, was a clever strategy that found the grand fleet opportunely in the North Sea when, a few days later, war was declared, with the result of bottling up the German fleet in the helpless condition in which it remains to this day."

It will be remembered that Sir Edward Grey has said that only he prepares for war who plans war.



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